



Establish vegetation adjacent to sloughs, streams, and ponds

What to do:

Riparian areas—plants and trees associated with water—support more wildlife species than any other type of habitat and are a significant complement to other farmland habitats. You can considerably enhance the value of ditches, sloughs, and other privately-owned waterways by leaving or planting trees and other tall vegetation adjacent to these aquatic systems. Trees that provide shade help to eliminate problem vegetation. Planting perennial grasses and sedges helps to eliminate weeds.

When you plant, be sure to allow for periodic maintenance of waterways. Place temporary shelters around young trees to protect them from cattle, deer, beaver, jackrabbits, ground squirrels, and other species. If you use appropriate species and seed sources, the habitat should require no

special care once it is established (unless beavers are plentiful). Routine maintenance will be required to ensure adequate flow capacity of the waterway.

Benefits:

- Offers vegetation of varying heights for songbirds, small mammals, and upland game birds. Established trees shelter deer and fawns and offer roosting or nesting areas for hawks, owls, and other birds.
- Provides concealing vegetation near water that wildlife use as travel corridors to reach nearby wildlife habitat.
- Stabilizes banks and reduces soil erosion.
- Protects adjacent fields from desiccating winds and dust.
- Can reduce maintenance costs if you clear one side of the ditch each year.

(Left) Cultivated vegetation adds extra value to this farm pond. (Right) This field bordering a slough is being planted with perennial grasses, shrubs, and trees.

